

Talking to the News: How to Share Your Story



What Is the Press?

The press means:

- TV news
- Newspapers
- Radio
- Online news websites

Basically - Reporters tell stories to the public.



Why Talk to the Press?

Talking to the press can:

- Help people learn about disability rights
- Share problems that need fixing
- Celebrate success
- Change laws and policies
- Help others feel less alone



Before You Reach Out

Ask yourself:

- What is the problem?
- What do I want to change?
- What is my main message?
- Am I ready to speak publicly?
- It is okay to ask for support or say no.





How to Contact a Reporter

You can:

- Send an email
- Call the newsroom
- Use the Contact Us page
- Message on social media
- Keep your message short and clear.

Example Email

Hello,

- My name is ____.
- I am a self-advocate.
- I would like to talk about ____.
- This issue affects many people with disabilities.
- Please contact me if you are interested.





What Reporters Want

Reporters look for:

- Real stories
- Clear examples
- Strong feelings
- Why it matters now

Getting Ready for an Interview

Before the interview:

- Write down 3 main points
- Practice saying them out loud
- Keep answers short
- Use examples



During the Interview

Remember:

- Speak slowly
- Take your time
- It is okay to pause
- Stay on your message
- Be honest
- If unsure, say: I'm not sure about that.



Basic Interview Steps

1. Say what happened
2. How it made you feel
3. What needs to change

BE Short. Clear. Strong



Know the Risks



Talking to the press is public.

- People may agree or disagree.
- Ask yourself if you are okay being named or on camera.
- You can ask not to share private details.

Setting Boundaries

You can say:

- I don't want to talk about that.
- That is private.
- I want to focus on this issue.
- You are in control of your story.

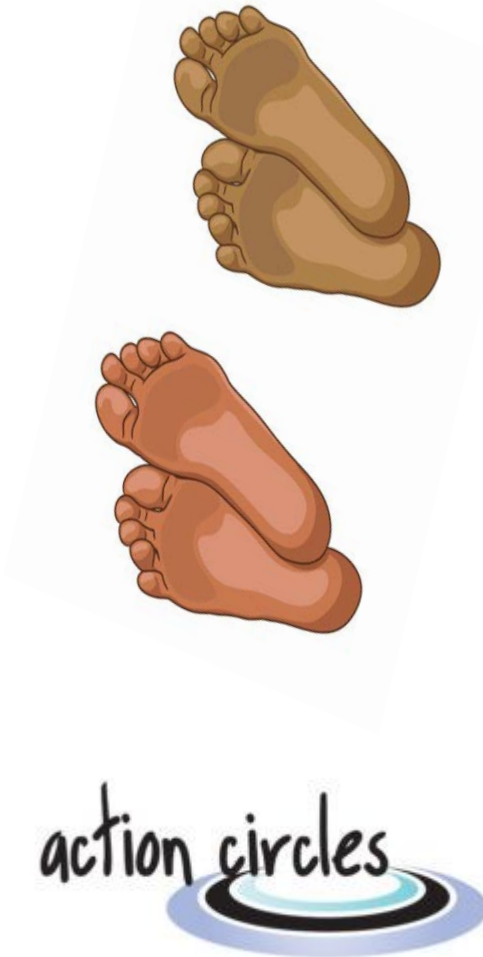


What to Do if You Feel Angry or Upset During Interview

It is important as a leader to manage your emotions. This tip will help you calm down and focus on getting your message across.

Let's do some Toe Curls

- Put your feet flat on the ground
- Curl your toes.
- Hold it for 10 seconds. (or pinch your leg if you are not able to curl your toes).
- This redirects your brain from feeling angry and relaxes your body.
- It also helps to take a deep breath. This helps you focus on the meeting.



Learn How to Pivot

Sometimes the reporter will ask a question you do NOT want to answer. Your job is to get back to talking about your important message across. You may have heard the term Pivot(s) while either playing, or watching basketball. This is a different way of using the term.



Pivots keep the conversation on topic. It's okay to use small talk, but your time with a reporter is limited, so use your time wisely. If the topic wanders, pivot back to the issue. In other words - get back to talking about your topic.



Pivots Are Phrases to Say to Change the Conversation Back to Your Topic



1. “I see your point. The way I look at it is...”
2. “That’s a good question. Here’s how I think about the issue.”
3. “The important thing to remember is...”

Other people who use pivots are politicians. The next time you are watching the news or a late-night talk show, watch how they will pivot back to the topic they want to talk about. Pay close attention to that.



After the Interview



Understand that the reporter decides what to use.

- They may shorten your words.
- That is normal.
- Celebrate that you spoke up.

Final Message

Your voice matters.

- The media can help create change.
- You do not have to be perfect.
- You just have to be real.

